

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An extensible apertured nonwoven web, and a method for making such an apertured nonwoven web. In one embodiment the method comprises the steps of providing an apertured nonwoven web, incrementally stretching it in a direction substantially parallel to the cross machine direction, and applying tension in the machine direction such that the web width after applying tension is less than the web width after incremental stretching. In another embodiment the method comprises the steps of providing a nonwoven web; weakening the nonwoven web at a plurality of locations to create a plurality of weakened, melt-stabilized locations; applying a first tensioning force to the nonwoven web to cause the nonwoven web to rupture at the plurality of weakened, melt-stabilized locations creating a plurality of apertures in the nonwoven web coincident with the weakened, melt-stabilized locations, incrementally stretching the nonwoven web in a direction substantially parallel to the cross machine direction, and applying tension in the machine direction such that the web width after applying machine direction tension is less than the web width after incremental stretching. An apparatus for producing a web of the present invention by this method is also disclosed. The extensible apertured nonwoven web produced has a plurality of apertures each having a hole size greater than 2 mm^2 , and a hole aspect ratio less than 6, the nonwoven web having an open area greater than 15% and being capable of at least 70% extension in the cross machine direction at a loading of 10 g/cm.

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